



Reviewer : Neal MARTIN

#222

December 2015

2014 Burgundies

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Albert Bichot is one of those Beaune-based producers that can really surprise. Maybe like me, you spent years dismissing the wines while drinking your La Tâche and the lo and behold, you are served a bottle of Bichot blind and marvel at how well it shows. As readers will know from previous TWA reports, I thought Albert Bichot did brilliantly well in 2012 (...) Returning to spend three hours tasting their 2014s, I was pleased with many of their wines (...) "There was not too much problem with fruit fly and we did a lot of sorting," director Alberic Bichot told me. "We picked from September 15 and then over the next 12 days. We had teams going through the vineyards. We had to keep waiting for the ripeness." (...) there is great potential to be found in their wonderful Aloxe-Corton Clos des Maréchaudes or Gevrey-Chambertin Lavaux Saint-Jacques. **Their 2014 Grands Echézeaux? It's up there with the big guns.** (...) I've been a bit critical here but that is because Albert Bichot sets its bar much higher than in the past. Good for them is what I say.

The **2014 Chassagne-Montrachet 1er Cru Vide Bourse** has a racy and lively bouquet with leesy, citrus fruit that contains plenty of energy. The palate is fresh and vibrant with a crisp line of acidity - orange zest and a touch of toffee apple, the wood a little evident on the finish but **you cannot help being impressed by the powerful finish.** It demands attention...and it deserves it. (90-92)

The **2014 Nuits-Saint-Georges Blanc Les Terrasses Chateau-Gris** has a light white chocolate-tinged bouquet with just a brush of honey. The palate is rounded with soft, honeyed texture, leavened by the keen thread of acidity. This is so smooth and harmonious, hints of peach and apricot on the seductive finish. Quite commercial maybe, but you cannot complain. (88-90)

The **2014 Corton-Charlemagne Grand Cru - Domaine du Pavillon** was not picked until the last moment to obtain the ripeness. It has a well defined bouquet with citrus peel, a touch of brioche and orange blossom, quite precise but it needs bottle age to develop intensity. The palate is fresh on the entry, quite rounded in the mouth, better concentration here than many of its peers with a rounded, lightly honeyed finish that lingers in the mouth. **This is a very fine Corton-Charlemagne from Bichot with more potential than many others that I tasted.** (92-94)

The **2014 Criots-Bâtard-Montrachet Grand Cru** has a delightful, mineral-driven nose with touches of white flower and baking powder infusing the comely citrus fruit. The palate is very well balanced with nicely integrated oak. There is refinement and tenderness here, with hints of almond and coconut delicately interwoven on the finish. **Lovely.** (92-94)



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The **2014 Savigny-lès-Beaune les Picotins** has a slightly muted, peppermint-tinged bouquet that is perhaps showing just a touch of reduction. The palate is sweet and supple on the entry, quite generous in the mouth with plush red fruit, a touch of spice and a fulfilling, suave, white pepper-tinged finish that lingers nicely. **This is certainly worth a look.** (88-90)

The **2014 Pommard 1er Cru Les Rugiens - Domaine du Pavillon** has an elegant and harmonious bouquet, with pine-tinged red berry fruit. The palate is medium-bodied with sappy red fruit, saturated tannin, good depth and a dash of bell pepper on a well crafted, refined finish. **This is a classy Rugiens from the domaine and well worth seeking out.** (89-91)

The **2014 Aloxe-Corton 1er Cru Clos des Maréchaudes - Domaine du Pavillon** has a pretty wild strawberry and cranberry scented bouquet, the oak nicely interwoven here. The palate is well balanced with supple ripe tannin, well judged acidity, harmonious red cherry and raspberry fruit, with a very sleek and seductive finish. This punches well above its weight -- a very well crafted Aloxe-Corton. (90-92)

The **2014 Morey-Saint-Denis 1er Cru Les Sorbets** has a pretty nose with effervescent orange blossom and ripe cherry aromas, just a hint of vanilla pod in the background. The palate is medium-bodied with supple red berry fruit and fine tannins; the roundness is more akin to a Chambolle-Musigny, with a lovely sensual finish. **What a gorgeous little Morey Saint Denis.** (90-92)

The **2014 Nuits-Saint-Georges 1er Cru Chaines-Carteaux** has a rather pointed, slightly disjointed nose that will need time to settle. The palate is medium-bodied with supple ripe tannin, quite plush in the mouth, fine acidity and showing admirable class and precision on the finish. Once the aromatics "fill out," I think this will be a delightful, probably early drinking Nuits-Saint-Georges. (88-90)

The **2014 Chambolle Musigny 1er Cru les Amoureuses** has a crisp raspberry and cranberry-scented bouquet, a hint of dried orange peel in the background. The palate is very refined with crisp tannin, not a deep or voluminous Amoureuses, but sophisticated and quite complex, with tangible mineralité on the broody, almost introspective finish. I just think this needs several years in bottle. (90-92)

The **2014 Vosne-Romanée 1er Cru les Malconsorts - Domaine du Clos Frantin** has an elegant, refined bouquet with mineral-tinged red berry fruit, composed and a little backward but nicely focused. There is class here. The palate is supple on the entry with fine tannin, silky smooth in texture, very harmonious and nicely structured on the finish. **This is a subtle Malconsorts, one that should not be underestimated.** (92-94)

The **2014 Gevrey-Chambertin 1er Cru Lavaux-Saint-Jacques** has plenty of fruité on the nose with outgoing strawberry and raspberry scents, hints of rosemary and cold stone coming through with time. The palate is supple on the entry with impressive tension, a little tightness to deal with on the second half, but bounding with energy and tension on the long and tender finish. **This is another classy wine from Bichot.** (91-93)

The **2014 Charmes-Chambertin Grand Cru** has a modest nose that does not want to create too much of a fuss. It feels a little backward and introverted - surprisingly for a Charmes-Chambertin. The palate is better with impressive depth and fine balance. The acidity here is well judged and the structure is more Mazoyères than Charmes-Chambertin (where the fruit comes from). There is fine delineation towards the finish with sour cherry, orange zest and mineral elements that linger long in the mouth. Hopefully those aromatics will awaken in bottle. (90-92)

The **2014 Chambertin Grand Cru - Domaine du Clos Frantin** has a little more volume and generosity on the nose with maraschino cherry, raspberry coulis and orange blossom scents. The palate is medium-bodied with supple, ripe tannin, gentle grip that should dissipate by the time of bottling. This is a "steady" Chambertin, perhaps just playing it a bit safe for now. (90-92)

The **2014 Clos-de-Vougeot Grand Cru - Domaine du Clos Frantin** has a well defined, airy, red cherry and bergamot-scented bouquet. The palate is crisp and fresh with fine tannin and well judged acidity. **This is an elegant and classy Clos Vougeot with a harmonious, svelte finish that is very Vosne-like in style. It is one of Bichot's best Grand Crus this year.** (92-94)

The **2014 Echezeaux Grand Cru - Domaine du Clos Frantin** has a perfumed, floral bouquet with rose petals infusing the red cherry and wild strawberry fruit - fine mineralité here and focus. The palate is fresh and vibrant on the entry with crisp acidity, a little chewiness on the mid-palate but good density -- a swarthy Echézeaux that is determined to make an impression. (90-92)

The **2014 Grands-Echezeaux Grand Cru - Domaine du Clos Frantin** has a more pixelated bouquet than the Echézeaux -- very nicely focused with more tangible mineralité developing in the glass. The palate is medium-bodied with fine tannin, impressive depth and focus, quite tensile with a hint of spice developing on the harmonious finish that exerts a gentle grip. **This is a very fine Grands- Echézeaux from Bichot.** (93-95)